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لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله



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The Ahmadiyya Movement In Islam

The Ahmadiyya Movement was founded by Hazrat Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi and the expected Messenger of all nations. In the spirit and power of all the earlier prophets, he came to serve and re-interpret the final and eternal teaching laid down by God in the Holy Quran. The Movement therefore represents the *True and Real Islam* and seeks to uplift humanity and to establish peace throughout the world. Hazrat Ahmad died in 1908, and the present Head of the Movement is his second successor, Hazrat Mirza Bashirud-Din Mahmud Ahmad under whose directions the Movement has established Missions in many parts of the world, the following being the addresses of some of them:

INDIA

Qadian, E. Punjab

PAKISTAN (Center)

Rabwah, Punjab

U.S.A.

1. The American Fazl Mosque,
2141 Leroy Place, N.W.
Washington 8, D.C.
2. 2522 Webster Avenue,
Pittsburgh 19, Pa.
3. 613 Locust St.,
St. Louis 1, Mo.
4. 115 W. 116th St., Suite 2,
New York 26, N.Y.

ENGLAND

The London Mosque,
63 Melrose Road,
London S.W. 18

SCOTLAND

36 Mansion House Road
Glasgow S.I.

SPAIN

K. I. Zafar,
Lista 58, Madrid

SWITZERLAND

Beckhammer 35, Zurich 57

GERMANY

Oderfelder Strasse 18
Hamburg 20

NETHERLANDS

Josef Israel Laan 48
Hague

NIGERIA

P.O. Box 418, Lagos

GOLD COAST

P.O. Box 39, Salt Pond

SIERRA LEONE

P.O. Box 11, Bo

KENYA COLONY

P.O. Box 554, Nairobi

ETHIOPIA

Dr. Nazir Ahmad,
Debra Berhan Hospital
Adis Ababa

ISRAEL

Mount Carmel, Haifa

SYRIA

Zaviatul Husni,
Shaghour, Damascus

LEBANON

170 Damascus Road, Beirut

INDONESIA

Petodjok Udik VII/10
Djakarta

JAVA

Masjid Ahmadiyya
Nagarawanji 57, Tasikmalaja

BALI ISLANDS

Abdul Hayee,
Bandjar Djawa

CEYLON

28 Mosque Road
Negombo

BORNEO

Box 30, Jesselton

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

نَحْمَدُكَ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِكَ الْكَرِيمِ

A Passage From The Holy Quran

And let not the disbelievers think that Our granting them respite is good for them; the result of Our granting them respite will only be that they will increase in sin; and they shall have an humiliating punishment.

Allah would not leave the disbelievers as you are, until He separated the wicked from the good. Nor would Allah reveal to you the unseen. But Allah chooses of His Messengers whom He pleases. Believe, therefore, in Allah and His Messengers. If you believe and be righteous, you shall have a great reward.

And let not those, who are niggardly with respect to what Allah has given them of His bounty, think that it is good for them; nay, it is evil for them. That with respect to which they were niggardly shall be put as a collar round their necks on the Day of Resurrection. And to Allah belongs the heritage of heavens and the earth, and Allah is well aware of what you do.

وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّمَا نُؤْتِيهِمْ
أَنَّمَا نُؤْتِيهِمْ لِيُزِدُوا إِكْرَامًا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ
مُهِينٌ ۝

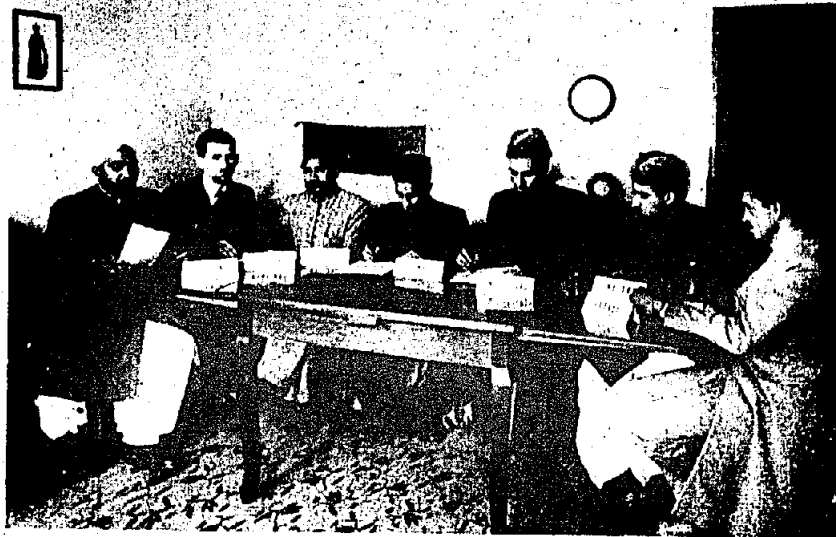
مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَذَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى مَا أَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ
حَتَّى يَمِيزَ الْخَيْبَةَ مِنَ الْغَلِيظِ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُطْلِعَكُمْ
عَلَى الْغَيْبِ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَجْتَبِي مِنْ رُسُلِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ
فَأْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَإِنْ تُؤْمِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَلَكُمْ أَجْرٌ
عَظِيمٌ ۝

وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَبْخُلُونَ بِمَا أَنَّهُمْ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ
هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُمْ بَلْ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَهُمْ سَيُطَوَّقُونَ مَا بَخُلُوا بِهِ
يَوْمَ الثَّغِيرِ وَاللَّهُ مِيرَاثُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا
تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ۝

(Al'Imran 179-181)

Ahmadiyya Missionaries in Europe

- (A picture of the Ahmadiyya missionaries at the European Missions' Annual Conference held in Zurich, Switzerland, in July, 1951.)



From left to right:

1. Karam Ilahi Zafar, Spain;
2. Bashir Ahmad Orchard, Scotland;
3. Ghulam Ahmad Bashir, Netherlands;
4. Abdul Latif, Germany;
5. Nasir Ahmad, Switzerland;
6. Zahur Ahmad Bajwa, England;
7. Ataur Rahman Malik, France.

THE SECOND ADVENT OF JESUS AND THE NEW TESTAMENT (I)

By

Bashir Ahmad Orchard,
Ahmadiyya Muslim Missionary, Scotland

Whenever God has appointed a divine messenger among His people that messenger and his disciples have always been rejected and persecuted. The prophet Jonah fled before the anger of his people. The prophet Daniel was thrown into a cage of lions. Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth, was shunned and rejected and put on the cross. The prophet Muhammad (may peace be on him) was driven out of his home and had to flee to Medina. He and his followers were bitterly persecuted by the pagan tribes of Arabia. In our age the prophecy regarding the second advent of Jesus has been fulfilled. This prophecy has been fulfilled in the person of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, who in 1889, on the basis of divine revelation from God, proclaimed his divine mission to the world. Describing the object of his mission, he says:

"The task for which God has appointed me is that I should by removing the obstacles which have been set between man and his Maker, re-establish in the hearts of men love and devotion to God, and by making manifest the truth, should put an end to all religious wars and strifes and thus lay the foundations of abiding peace, and should acquaint the world with the spiritual truths which it had forgotten, and should demonstrate to the world the true spiritual life which had been displaced by material desires, and should in my own life manifest those Divine powers which have been endowed on man but which can be manifested only through prayer and devotion; and above all that I should permanently re-establish that bright and pure Unity of God free from all polytheistic ideas, which had entirely disappeared from the hearts of men."

"God has endowed me with knowledge that I should warn those who have gone astray and should lead those who dwell in Darkness into Light."

"God has sent me to reform this sad plight and to lead mankind back to His pure Unity. Accordingly, I have explained all these things to you. I have also been sent to give to the world a firmer faith and to demonstrate to the world the existence of God; for faith has withered and the belief in a life hereafter has become a mere fable, and the conduct of man shows that his whole trust is placed in the world and in things material, and that he has no faith in God or the life to come. They talk of God and of spirituality but their hearts are filled with the love of this world. Jesus had found the Jews in the same state in which I find the world to-day, and just as lack of faith had driven love of God from the hearts of the Jews and had destroyed their morals, the world has today ceased to love God, and I have been sent to restore Truth and Faith and to revive the love and fear of God in the hearts of men. This alone is the object of my existence. God has informed me that the Heavens shall again draw nigh to the earth after it had drawn itself away. So I have come to renew these things and have been sent for this purpose."

Such was the great and noble task for which he had been appointed by God. He is the light of this dark age to whom God spoke, saying,

"I have made thee the Messiah, the son of Mary. Say 'I have come in the footsteps of Jesus.' They will answer, 'We have not heard this from our ancestors.' Say, God knoweth, and ye know but little. Ye are content with words and the truth is hidden from you."

"God will maintain thy name in honor till the world come to an end and will cause thy message to reach the uttermost corners of the earth."

It is only natural that our Christian friends will raise objection to the claims of the Promised Messiah because his advent has not taken place in the manner that they expect. Let them, however, know how the prophecy regarding the re-appearance of Elijah was fulfilled. According to the Old Testament Elijah ascended into heaven in a chariot

drawn by horses and the Jews were expecting his return to the earth which would precede the coming of the Messiah promised to them. However, Elijah never appeared in the manner that they expected but instead this prophecy was fulfilled in John the Baptist who came in the power and spirit of Elijah (*Matthew 11:14*). In like manner the Promised Messiah has come in the power and spirit of Jesus and not literally from heaven just as John the Baptist came in the power and spirit of Elijah and not physically from heaven. It is hoped that the mistake of the Jews in not accepting the divine office of John the Baptist and consequently rejecting the claims of Jesus to be their Messiah, may serve as a lesson and a caution to those Christians who are awaiting the return of Jesus. Let them not be too self-assured that the second coming of Jesus is to be fulfilled exactly in accordance with their expectations. The majority of Christians are agreed that the age has dawned which will see the coming of Jesus. Let them therefore hearken to the call of him that has appeared in the East and let them investigate the truth of the claims of God's Anointed—Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Let them not be hasty in judgment but examine the facts with due respect and tolerance so that they may not liken their behavior to that of the Jews nearly 2000 years ago.

It is now proposed to explain certain reasons which show Biblical evidence is unable to afford any sure knowledge concerning the second advent of Christ. Diligent students of the Bible have arrived at different conclusions on this matter and all vehemently advocate that their respective theories are based on Biblical authority. Different schools of thought exist among the Christians so it is therefore hoped that the reader will study this subject with all fair mindedness.

Textual Corruption

It cannot be denied that the text of the Bible has not been preserved in its purity and that it has suffered interpolation to such an extent that its reliability and trustworthiness can no longer be depended upon. It is not suggested that no portions of it have been preserved because the fulfillment of certain prophecies indicates the truth of those respective passages. However, though certain passages may have been preserved, they cannot in any way atone for the numerous other irrele-

vant and interpolated portions of the Bible. This subject can be dealt with in great length but it is not proposed to do so here and it is thought that the following testimonies of Christian scholars are in themselves sufficient to endorse the truth of this fact.

1. "Turning to the internal history of the New Testament text, it is evident that its original perfect purity was lost." (*Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge. Vol. 1.*)

2. "The unanimous recognition on the part of all Biblical scholars that the Old Testament cannot be taken as it stands, as a trustworthy account of history with which it deals, necessitates a hypothesis or it may be series of hypotheses which shall enable one to approach the more detailed study of its history and religion." ("Palestine", *Encyclopaedia Britannica. Vol. 20, page 615.*)

3. "The Pentateuch consists of several documents originally independent of each other, but finally, with various omissions, additions and alterations, pieced together so as to form one continuous history." (*The Documents of the Hexateuch*, by W. E. Addis, M.A., of Balilol College, Oxford, p. 14.)

4. "The New Testament in its very early times had no canonical authority, and alterations and additions were actually made where they seemed improvements." (*Encyclopaedia Biblica. Vol. 4, page 4980.*)

5. "Yet, as a matter of fact, every book in the New Testament, with the exception of the four great epistles of St. Paul, is at present more or less the subject of controversy, and interpolations are asserted even in these!" (*Encyclopaedia Britannica, 13th Edn. Vol. 3, page 643.*)

6. "They (variations) make it impossible for us to be certain that in every case we have exact words of prophet or apostle." (*Modern Study of the Old Testament and Inspiration* by T. H. Sprott, M.A., Vicar of St. Pauls, Wellington, New Zealand.)

What sure knowledge can be gained from such documentary evidence? When it is said that we cannot be certain that the words of prophet or apostle have passed down correctly then what value have those quotations upon which conclusions are based concerning Christ's

return? The following contradictory statements illustrate the force of this argument. At one place the New Testament says:

"That a light from heaven shined around about him and he fell to the earth and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul . . . and meanwhile those who journeyed stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no man." (*Acts 9:3-6.*)

But this is contradicted by the following verses:

"And when we were all fallen to the earth I heard a voice speaking unto me saying in the Hebrew tongue. . ." (*Acts 26:14.*)

"And they that were with me saw indeed the light and were afraid but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me." (*Acts 22:9.*)

These passages relate the incident of Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus. In the first passage we are told that those who were accompanying Paul stood speechless and heard the voice. This is contradicted by Paul in the second passage where he says that everyone who was with him fell to the ground and is again contradicted by him in the third passage where he says they did not hear the voice.

This illustration is only one of many which establishes beyond doubt the unreliability of textual quotations. This is a very important factor which all Christians should bear in mind before coming to definite conclusions based on quotations of Christ or those of any other prophet or apostle.

Parabolic Expressions

Another very important factor to be taken into account is that Jesus very often used to speak in parables. To quote the New Testament:

"All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them." (*Matthew 33:34.*)

"And he taught them many things by parables. . . ." (*Mark 4:2.*)

"And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it. But without a parable spake he not unto them. . . ." (*Mark 4:33, 34.*)

The above fact should be borne in mind before accepting a literal interpretation of the sayings of Jesus with respect to His second advent.

This is a very delicate point which it is hoped the reader will appreciate. The Book of Revelation purports the view that Jesus will come as a thief.

"Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garment lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."
(*Revelation 16:15.*)

Is there, however, a single Christian who believes that Jesus will literally assume the form of a thief at the time of His second advent? It is apparent that this quotation is a metaphor indicating that His coming would be in a quiet and unexpected manner as is the way of a thief. On what authority do Christians give a literal interpretation to other Biblical passages which depict his appearing in the clouds accompanied by angels and the blowing of trumpets as recorded in the following passage.

"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn; and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." (*Matthew 24, 30, 31.*)

Could not this be the parabolic language in which Jesus was wont to speak? Could any sound reason be honestly suggested why this should not be? The following verses taken from the Old Testament associating the Lord with the clouds and sound of trumpets, and which are clearly metaphorical in meaning, serve as added reason for believing that the above reported words of Christ may justifiably be accepted as metaphorical.

1. "The burden of Egypt. Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud and shall come into Egypt." (*Isaiah 19:1.*)

2. "And the Lord shall be seen over them and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning; and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south." (*Zechariah 9:14.*)

This second factor is one of vital importance to which all Christians should give serious thought before being too confident that their present views concerning Christ's return are really accurate and trustworthy.

Prophecies Falsified

The third factor which prevents the possibility of any authoritative conclusion to be reached in this matter is the definite falsification of certain prophecies.

The three synoptic Gospels contain lengthy passages relating to prophecies of Jesus in connection with His second advent. In each Gospel Jesus's address is slightly varied but it is quite clear that it is one and the same which has been recorded. The full text may be referred to in the Gospels so it is only proposed to quote those portions which are most relevant to the present discussion.

1. "Immediately after the tribulations of those days shall the sun be darkened and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet; and they shall gather his elect from the four winds—from one end of heaven to the other. Now learn a parable of the fig tree—when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh; so likewise when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. *Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.* Heaven and earth shall pass away but my words shall not pass away." (Matthew 24: 29-35.)

2. "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light; and the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken; and then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory; and then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds—from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven. Now learn a parable of the fig tree—when her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near; so, ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors. *Verily I say unto you, that this*

generation shall not pass till all these things be done. Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away. (Mark 13: 24-31.)

3. "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars and upon the earth distress of nations in perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come and pass then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. And he spake to them a parable—Behold, the fig tree, and all the trees; when they now shoot forth ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand; so likewise, when ye see these things come to pass know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. *Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled.* Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Luke 21:25-33.)

These passages clearly go to show that Jesus prophesied that he would return in that very same generation and that all the signs spoken of would precede his advent. Christians are well aware that he did not return within that stipulated period and to-day, the majority of Christians are still awaiting for Jesus's return. There is only one conclusion, which must be admitted, that the predictions of Jesus have proved untrue which at once divests the Gospels of any divine authority from which any certain knowledge of his return can be gained. In order to overcome this difficulty, Christians have endeavoured to explain it away. They have not succeeded in being able to do so and for the benefit of the reader who might have been influenced by one or other of their apologies it will be worthwhile to examine them.

In dealing with the difficulty, Christians have attempted to solve the problem by making use of either the passage from Matthew or Mark because St. Luke's version altogether destroys their theories.

One argument advanced is that Jesus is not implying that His second advent will take place in the same generation but that he is here referring to the fig tree which will be seen to put forth its leaves and

subsequently be followed by the summer season. This is a very poor and far fetched apology because the text is not even suggestive of this explanation. Besides, Jesus did not speak of the fig tree as a reality but was using it metaphorically in a parable. The Lukan version, however, altogether repudiates such an explanation and clearly obviates the fact that it was not the summer season following the signs of the fig tree to which Jesus referred but the fulfilment of all the heavenly signs followed by the coming of the Kingdom of God.

Another explanation advanced is that the fig tree is the symbolic sign of the Jews and that the action of the fig tree putting forth its leaves indicates a time of the future when the Jews will begin to fulfil certain prophecies regarding themselves. It is also suggested that the State of Israel which has been established in Palestine and the increase of Jewish immigrants is in accordance with prophecy and a sign of the fig tree putting forth its leaves. They contend that Jesus's prophecy relates to these times and that therefore the present generation is the one which will most probably witness His return. The Lukan version again proves that the value of this explanation is worthless for here it is reported that Jesus is not referring to the fig tree in particular but that he is referring to the general course of nature of all trees.

"And he spake to them a parable—Behold the fig tree and all the trees. When they now shoot forth ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand." (*Luke* 21: 29, 31.)

This passage makes it quite clear that Jesus is not specially speaking of the fig tree as distinguished from other trees. Therefore it does not warrant the interpretation of the parable as advanced by many Christians. The real purpose of this parable is an illustration to show that as the approach of summer is indicated by the changing signs in nature so likewise the time approaching the second advent of Jesus would witness those signs which He said would precede His coming.

Elsewhere in the Gospels we find Jesus again teaching that His second coming would take place in the life time of some of the people to whom he was addressing. For example:

"Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom." (*Matthew* 16: 28.)

These words, beyond all doubt, endorse Jesus's other prophecy that his return would come about in that very same generation. What possible conclusions can be drawn from such prophecies that are so obviously falsified? Is it not certain that the views maintained and upheld by Christians are no more than conjectures? The arguments upon which they base their conclusions are like paper houses that collapse at the slightest blow of wind.

As in the case of the first instance, Christians have also endeavored to explain the difficulty involved in the above prophecy. One line of argument is that this verse applies to the destruction of Jerusalem about A.D. 70, and they interpret the expression 'The Son of Man coming in his kingdom' in a spiritual sense other than the literal sense applied elsewhere. This is another very poor explanation and the words of Jesus in the verse preceding this one do not warrant the idea.

"For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." (*Matthew 16: 27.*)

Here Jesus is clearly speaking of his second advent at which time 'he shall reward every man according to his works.' He never rewarded every man according to his works at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. It is, therefore, nothing more than deliberate misinterpretation of the text to suggest that in the very next verse, which is in direct continuation, Jesus is referring to the destruction of Jerusalem.

In order to show without any doubt whatsoever that the New Testament teaches that Jesus's return was prophesied and expected to happen in the generation of Jesus and the apostles, let us see what these men themselves believed and taught.

Paul in his first epistle to the Thessalonians writes:

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we

which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (4:13-18.)

After continuing to exhort the Thessalonians to be sober and watchful, etc., he then says,

"And I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (5:23.)

The above passages teach in the most positive language that Paul and the Thessalonians were to expect the coming of Jesus in their own life time. Again in the first epistle to Timothy, Paul writes,

"That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ." (6:14.)

Having seen that Paul, in accordance with the teachings of Jesus, preaches his speedy return let us see what some of the apostles have to say on this matter. James, in his epistle to the Hebrews, writes:

"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receives the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." (5:7, 8.)

The apostle James plainly expresses his belief that he also expected the early return of Jesus. He writes that the coming of the Lord draweth nigh, and exhorts those to whom he is writing to be patient unto his coming. Similarly Peter expresses the same belief in his first epistle.

"And the end of all things is at hand." (4:7.)

Before closing the discussion on this third and very important factor let us read the testimonies of some modern writers who contend that it was indeed a fact that the speedy return of Jesus was preached in the Apostolic age. Mr. Greg, in his "*Creed of Christendom*," writes:

"Our second position was that the apostles held some opinions which we know to be erroneous. It is essential not to overstate the case. They held several opinions which we believe to be erroneous. They unanimously and unquestionably believed and

taught that the End of the World was at hand, and would arrive in the life time of the then existing generation. On this point there appears to have been no hesitation in their individual minds, nor any difference of opinion among them."

And Mr. Gibbon writes in his famous work *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*:

"In the primitive Church, the influence of truth was very powerfully strengthened by an opinion which, however it may deserve respect for its usefulness and antiquity, has not been found agreeable to experience. It was universally believed that the end of the world and the kingdom of heaven was at hand. The near approach of this wonderful event had been predicted by the apostles; the tradition of it was preserved by their earliest disciples, and those who understand, in their literal sense, the discourses of Christ himself, were obliged to expect the second and glorious coming of the Son of Man in the clouds before that generation was totally extinguished, which had beheld his humble condition upon earth, and which might still be witness of the calamities of the Jews under Vespasian or Hadrian."

Does not the result of the discussion of these three factors conclusively establish the impossibility of being able to acquire any authentic knowledge of the second advent of Jesus from the New Testament? Let us read some of the testimonies of the ministers of the Church. The Rev. John Macnought, in his work on the divine authority of the Holy Writ, says:

"Unless we are prepared to think our blessed saviour liable to err, we must believe that in this, as in other demonstrable cases, the Evangelists slightly varied the form of what the Son of God had said, and so unintentionally gave to Jesus's words a meaning which he did not intend they should bear, and in which case they were not true."

Can any fair minded person, who having absorbed the arguments and evidence reviewed in the foregoing pages, honestly believe that the doctrines preached by different Christian communities on the second advent of Jesus are based on any authentic foundation? They are, indeed, no more than personal ideas and conjectures.

(To be continued)

ISLAM AND WORLD AFFAIRS(I)

By

Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan

This is a very large subject and, as any subject related to world problems must be, it is a very serious one. I have divided it into two portions. The first part will be an attempt to explain the position of Islam *vis-a-vis* the various other religions which have currency in the world today, so that we should be able to place it against its proper background and appraise it accordingly.

That is even more important than the specific teachings of Islam relative to the problems with which mankind is faced today. If the first is properly appreciated, then each one of us can receive together from Islam the guidance that it gives with regard to the various walks of life and, applying that guidance, try to resolve those problems for ourselves. After I have dealt with that aspect I will then go on to discuss some of the teachings of Islam with regard to some of the problems with which mankind is faced today. Recently I was at a meeting of the Moral Rearmament people. There, I heard somebody describe the present age as "the age of ideologies." The phrase struck me as very apt. It struck me so because just now there is a good deal of ideological conflict which is tending to divide the world into two, what unfortunately appear to be, rival camps. Then, let us assume that this is the age of ideologies; that is to say, an age in which peoples' minds are disturbed with regard to the resolving of world problems on the basis of one set of doctrines or another set of doctrines. From that point of view, Islam is a complete ideology in itself. It is the most wholesome and beneficent ideology available to man.

Through it, man can successfully and beneficently resolve all problems with which he may be faced from age to age, epoch to epoch, whether those problems relate to the individual, to the family, to the community, to the nation or to mankind as a whole.

What is Islam?

The question then arises — at least it would arise in the minds of those who have not been familiar with Islam previously — What is Islam? There may be various definitions of what Islam is. But from the point of view of this subject I might say that Islam is the

ultimate evolution and perfection of religion defined in the strict sense. As there has been evolution in man's physical and intellectual faculties and qualities, so there has been corresponding evolution — and, indeed, it was necessary that there should be corresponding evolution — in the spiritual guidance that has been revealed from time to time for man's benefit. It stands to reason that as man's intellect progressed the spiritual guidance that God revealed for his benefit should also proceed from stage to stage in order to fit in with the intellectual state at which mankind had arrived.

We can see from even a cursory attention to the history of various countries that there has been, slow at certain stages, faster at others, a continuous intellectual evolution of man. Therefore, it stands to reason that the spiritual guidance which was adequate for one stage of intellectual progress should have been expanded for the next stage when man's intellect had progressed further. In other words, one might say that the divine wisdom has made provision for the moral and spiritual guidance of mankind through the ages in accordance with the needs of man in each state. In fact if God is not an entirely detached and divorced intelligence from mankind, it is obligatory that such guidance should have evolved itself from stage to stage as man progressed.

The Purpose of Our Creation

It is a fundamental doctrine with those, at any rate, who believe in God, that God has created the universe and He has made man the central and focal point of the universe. This creation of the universe and the creation of man as the central point of the universe must have had a purpose. God would not do this, as it were, idly. To fulfill this purpose for which the universe and man had been created, it is again obvious that man must have knowledge of this purpose.

How is he to obtain knowledge of the divine purpose? It has often been said that man can, by the exercise of his reason, find out what the divine will is, and then he can probably proceed to put his own conduct in accord with it. It is true that man has been endowed with reason. Therefore, at each stage, he has to employ the faculty of reason for all purposes. But it is a fallacy to presume that by the sole and unaided exercise of reason man can discover what the divine will and purpose is. This will become intelligible by a very

ordinary illustration. Assume that any two persons meet for the first time. After having met once or twice or more often, there is the desire in each to create a closer friendship, to get closer together, to find out what the other thinks, what are his standards of values, and what he expects of you as a friend. Well, then, is it your experience that you can do that with the aid of reason alone? Remember, that is a very favorable instance in which reason can have its play. The other person is a person of your own experience, lives under conditions under which you yourself live. Therefore, there is a great deal of material present from which you can deduce what his likes and dislikes will be, what he would expect you to do under certain circumstances. Yet, is it not the experience of every one of us that very often in a case like that we make mistakes? How often does not a misunderstanding arise between the closest friends? It is because with the exercise of reason alone we cannot get to an absolute knowledge of the wishes, desires, likes, dislikes, preferences and standards of values of even another human being just like us in every respect.

Then how is it possible that that should be a sure guide in the case of God? In the case of a friend, we not only expect him but we beg him to disclose his wishes to us so that we may conform our conduct accordingly in order to give him pleasure or in order to make the bond between us closer. Then how is it that we can expect that in a relationship that is far more delicate, let us say, between the Creator and man?

The Need of Revelation

God has created us. We all are subordinate to His will. That we should expect to find out and discover His will by the sole and unaided exercise of reason when we fail so often in discovering the will of a friend of ours who has similar sentiments to ours, who lives under the same conditions and limitations as we do, it follows, therefore, that you need not even this illustration to make it clear that God's will or God's purpose, His object in creating man, can be discovered only through revelation. And if He is Providence, then it follows axiomatically that from the spiritual and moral and even physical guidance of mankind God must have revealed His purpose from time to time. Otherwise, one would be bound to conclude that He had created the universe and man idly, as I have said, which is impossible. If He has created them with a purpose, He must have revealed that

purpose to man from time to time.

That is the basis of all religions. At least it is the basis of religion as properly defined; that is to say, that all religious doctrines or fundamental teachings must be based upon revelations is common to all religions. But we also know that all progress and achievement is gradual. The higher the objective, the more gradual is the evolutionary process. It is only the cheaper objective, the lighter objective, the less serious objective, that may be achieved quickly or at one stage. The higher the objective, the longer will be the evolutionary process and the greater the stages of it. Therefore, the preparation of man and the training of man for the ultimate achievement of the objective for which he has been created must again obviously have been by stages.

This is reinforced by another illustration. We have seen that on the physical side, as well as on the intellectual side, evolution has been by stages. Therefore, equally on the spiritual side, if all were to keep pace with each other, the evolution would be by stages. What follows from that?

It is true that through all stages mankind has been in need of divine guidance. God being Providence, or, as the Quran says, *Rabbul Alamin*, is the Creator and Sustainer of all the universe. *Rabb* is the Being who creates, sustains, nourishes and makes provision for the stage-by-stage evolution toward perfection of the universe. Therefore, He being Providence, such guidance must have been furnished in each case before the need of it arose.

Supposing a spiritual need has arisen and God has not made provision for it in advance. Then the obvious thing is that those who pass away before their provision manifests itself have not had the opportunity of conforming their life and conduct to the necessary spiritual guidance. It again, therefore, follows not only that God makes provision for spiritual guidance in each state which is suited to that stage, but that in itself provision is made in advance of its need becoming manifest as to the next of our fundamentals.

Another attribute of God, *Rahman*, which is mentioned very often in the Quran is that aspect of God's mercy by which God makes provision for the fullest development of man, irrespective of man having done anything to bring about that provision. Again, that is the manifestation of God's mercy which endows man's actions and conduct

with the most beneficial results. That being so, we have arrived at the stage in our reasoning that God makes spiritual provision through revelation for guidance and progress of mankind; that in each stage of man's evolution that guidance is suited to that stage, and, therefore, must be limited to it. It is true that a portion of it will relate to fundamental principles and will be continued. However, that which was suited only to that stage will cease to be of effect after that stage has been passed.

This guidance has from time to time, as I have said, come through revelation. Those who were the recipients of this revelation are known in the ordinary religious and even layman's language as prophets. Therefore, the method of guidance of mankind adopted by God is through revelation, that revelation having been conveyed to mankind through prophets.

The Spiritual Evolution of Mankind

As I have said, in certain stages in the evolution of man, mankind was being evolved or trained in sections. There was not much communication, either physical or intellectual, between different sections of mankind up to a certain point. Up until then, again it follows that the provision made for the guidance of mankind, for its training, for its evolution, must have been by sections. For each section a certain guidance was revealed suited to the conditions of that section of mankind, in that stage of their evolution. In other words, the mission of each prophet was limited in two respects.

One was in respect of the people concerned; that is, in respect of the people to whom the prophet was sent or among whom the prophet was raised. I mean by that the tribe, the community or the nation to which a prophet was sent. We have an instance of that in the Gospel, in the case, for instance, of Jesus in whom we, as Muslims, on the authority of the Quran, believe as a righteous prophet of God. When a Gentile woman approached Him and asked to be guided, he said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel." (St. Matt. XV. 24).

This means that the guidance which God sent through him was limited in respect of the people to whom it was addressed and to the stage to which it was addressed.

The Mission of Jesus

So it was with all the prophets of Israel. The address is all the time to Israel and those prophets are known as the Prophets of Israel. Why? God chose that method because in those stages of the evolution of mankind it was being trained in sections. Therefore, the mission of each prophet was limited to the people to whom he was sent or among whom he was raised. It was limited not only in respect of the people but also in respect of the stage through which that people was passing. This is illustrated by Jesus again who said:

"I have yet many things to say unto you: but ye cannot bear them now." (St. John XVI:12)

Now, why could not they bear them? Was it because of some physical weakness? That obviously could not have been so. It was because the intellectual stage at which the people had arrived had not yet fitted them for receiving the perfect or the universal guidance.

It again has always been the divine purpose that, before the advent of a prophet, God, as it were, foreshadows to mankind what is to come later so that they should be prepared for the acceptance of the further truth when it should happen. It is unfortunate that it has been a tendency in various sections of mankind to regard that which has been willed to them as perfect in itself, and then to say that no more is needed. That has not been God's plan or God's purpose. Not until the whole truth is revealed was that God's purpose.

He goes on to say,

"Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth." (St. John XVI:13, 14)

There have been various interpretations of this verse as I am well aware. The most common interpretation has been that after the event of the Crucifixion—I advisedly say, "the event of the Crucifixion," because the Quran teaches that though Jesus was put upon the Cross he did not die there—it is said that the disciples were blessed through holiness and that that was the coming of the Spirit of Truth.

I would make only two observations on that. In the first place in all these verses from St. John, the word Comforter, is mentioned as a person and not as a manifestation. For instance, later on, he says

"For He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall he speak."

He spoke enough as a person, not as a manifestation.

There is also no reason why the divine guidance should not have been revealed to Jesus, but he says, no, not through me, meaning not through his dispensation. It does not mean that his dispensation has come to an end and that the next dispensation would appear.

Limitations of Previous Revelations

As I have said, the revelations, the previous guidances, were limited in two respects—in respect of the people to whom they were addressed—let us say, the tribe, the community, or a particular nation—and in respect of the stage for which they were meant. There were many consequences of this. One consequence was that so long as the guidance which was being sent for any particular stage was clearly apprehended by the prophet through whom it was being sent, it could be conveyed by the prophet. However, it was sent in the words of the prophet himself. God would reveal the guidance to the prophet and the prophet would merely grasp it himself and then, in his own words, he would convey to the people that "God desires you to do this", or, "God desires you to abstain from this," or, "God desires you so to conform your conduct to what He desires," and so on. But it would be conveyed by the prophet. However, it was sent in the words of the people and, more than the people, it was limited to a stage. Whatever was necessary and adequate for that stage could be explained simply and adequately by the prophet in his own words. There was no necessity for the guidance received or the revelation received to be preserved in the form of verbal or literal revelations.

Is the Text of the Bible Preserved?

Another consequence was that even in the form in which the guidance was apprehended by the prophet and was conveyed to the people, it did not need to be preserved after it had served its purpose. Take up a critical study of any of the scriptures of any of the older religions, or, look up in the religious bibliographies under those headings with regard to their compilation and their preservation and their present state. The followers of those religions agree that what we have today is not what was conveyed by the prophet to his people. In many instances, the original is not available. Those who have studied

gospels critically are agreed upon this, that the language of Jesus and his disciples, in which obviously the teaching of Jesus was conveyed to his disciples, and through them to the people of Israel, was not Greek; that apart from a word or two, perhaps, Jesus was not familiar with Greek at all. Yet, today the Greek version is described as the original of the Gospels. It must obviously have been itself a direct translation from the language in which the Gospels were written or a translation from a translation. And what we have now today in our hands in the English versions is a further translation from the Greek and a revised after revised after revised translation so that we are miles away from what may have originally been said by Jesus to his people.

Even with regard to the compilation of the Gospels, there is the testimony of those very scholars that the earliest Gospel was probably composed not earlier than eighty to one hundred years after the event of the Crucifixion. There are glimpses here and there of what Jesus must have obviously said, but there is no guarantee that all that he said, together with the context in which he said was preserved and handed down to us.

About the Old Testament the Protestant scholars have said that the record was not compiled until about four hundred years before the appearance of Jesus, which means about a thousand years after the death of Moses.

There is further irrefutable, internal evidence that that is so. The first five books of the Old Testament are supposed to have been revealed to Moses; that is to say, they contained the record of that which God had conveyed to Moses. The Deuteronomy is the last of these five books. This is what the concluding verses of the Deuteronomy itself said. In Chapter XXXIV of the Deuteronomy, Verses 5 to 10, after the whole record is put there, it reads as follows:

"So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord."

It is obvious that this would not have been conveyed to Moses. So Moses died there. But we go further:

"And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day."

That means that nobody knows of Moses' sepulchre unto this day. Unto what day? Unto the day when that book was compiled. The words "unto this day" clearly indicate that the record was being compiled long after the death of Moses, because if it had been in a few years, in the first place, people would not have lost knowledge of the place of sepulchre of Moses. In any case, this expression would not have been used, "no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day," meaning that a longer period had elapsed.

Verse 9 and 10 go on as follows:

"And Joshua, the son of Nun, was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: And the children of Israel hearkened unto him and did as the Lord commanded Moses."

"10. And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face."

That means that since the time of Moses, among the people of Israel, no other prophet has arisen "like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face." That shows that this record was compiled long afterward, long after many prophets after Moses had appeared in Israel. But none of them had appeared like unto Moses. It is obvious that none had appeared like unto him for a reason I shall come to later.

These things show that the older scriptures have not been preserved in the form in which the guidance was conveyed by the prophet to the people. If it was God's purpose that that teaching should endure forever, then God's purpose would not be defeated. The fact that it has not endured leads to the inevitable conclusion that, in God's purpose, it was not meant to endure. It is a divine act which, after the purpose had been served, has merely been kept or preserved in some mutilated record of what the guidance was as a sort of archaeological curiosity.

If the actual guidance that was conveyed through those prophets to mankind was supposed to be the true guidance for mankind through the ages, where is it?

(To be continued)

THE PREACHING OF ISLAM IN INDONESIA

by

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From times immemorial, Indonesia has received waves of foreign cultural invasions. Great waves of migrants from India, China and Arabia, in quite a later stage of world history, starting approximately with the dawn of the Christian era, in different periods entered the archipelago and left deep impressions on the cultural and social life of the people of these islands. Among all the foreign cultural impacts, the influence of Islam on the cultural, religious and political life of Indonesia, was most profound and lasting. So much so that the centuries-old Hindu traditions, based on the rigid caste system and the spirit of chauvinism existing in the Hindu society, prior to the advent of Islam, were effaced from a major part of Indonesia, as soon as that religion penetrated the life of the people of the archipelago. The religion of Islam, owing to its democratic spirit, not only changed the spiritual outlook of the people but also their family life and engendered among them a new lease of spiritual and material values.

Islam was first introduced in Indonesia following the first Arab contact with the archipelago in the beginning of the tenth century A. D. Al-Masoodi, an Arab traveller, arrived in Java, in the year 957 A. D., and had long discourse with the king of that island. It shows that Indonesia had some connections with Arabs even prior to 1000 A. D. It was the time, when the Arabs had established trade relations with China and the Arab traders used to pass through Indonesia on their way to China. The Indonesians had also frequent trade and commercial relations with China, which led to deeper cultural affinity of the Indonesian traders with the Arabs. But these commercial relations were not in any way connected with the general spread of Islam in Indonesia. A few sporadic conversions do not alter the social and spiritual outlook of the whole community. These conversions were mostly confined to a few harbour-towns, as, Atjeh, Plem-bong Bantoen, etc.

The spread of Islam in Indonesia, like all other countries of the world, was almost entirely due to the relentless efforts of the missionaries of Islam. There were however, a number of people contributing to some extent to the spread of this religion in the archipelago; who were not regular missionaries. But the number of conversions effected in this way was very meagre. Islam, as a major social force in Indonesia, was entirely due to the influence of piety and righteousness, that these regular missionaries of Islam, commanded. Some of these missionaries had arrived from Arabia and India, with the sole purpose of spreading the message of Islam into these islands. One of these pioneer missionaries in Indonesia was Abdullah Arif, who had come from Arabia. Some other notable missionaries, who worked on their missionary errand in Indonesia, on different occasions were: Malik Ibrahim Shah, Raon Rehmat, Sonan Goning Jati, Raon Hako and Maulana Hassan-ud-Din. Juonoës, a notable person of Java, propagated the message of Islam, in the empire of Madja Pahit, the last of the Hindu kingdom in Java, towards the middle of the fifteenth century, and succeeded in converting a large population of the state. The conversion was altogether on voluntary basis and without any political motive. It was the second half of the 15th century that Islam became a political force in Java, following the downfall of the Madja Pahit empire in Western Java. The Muslims at this stage, on account of their numbers, were forced to take interest in political affairs. But this participation was the result of conversions already carried out.

The influence of Islam in Indonesia proved more lasting than any of the other foreign cultural influences. One of the major factors leading to the establishment of the rule of Islam in Indonesia was the spirit of broadmindedness displayed by the Muslim rulers in dealing with the non-Muslim residents of the archipelago. During the heyday of the Muslim rule in Indonesia, the people of the other faiths were left unmolested in their internal religious affairs and the noble precept of the Holy Quran: "There is no compulsion allowed (in matters pertaining to) religion," was practised to the full.

This day, when the Republic of Indonesia has been proclaimed and the Dutch hordes have left the sacred soil of Indonesia, the Hindu culture in the island of Bali, off the coast of Sumatra, is found in its

original form, of over 2000 years back, when Hindu influence was prevalent in Indonesia. The belles of this island, gem in the beauty-spot of Indonesia—dressed in bright colored sarongs and multi-colored blouses, still remind one of the age-old Hindu culture that once prevailed this part of the world. The traces of this culture have fast disappeared from the land of its birth i. e. Bharat, except a few sporadic remnants, but the island of Bali stands unique, in its preservation of thousand years' old traditions of Hindu culture and religion. Does it not go to the credit of the Muslim rulers of Indonesia, who through the democratic spirit of Islam, left indigenous cultures prosper in their original forms? They could efface that culture if they so liked.

Besides Hindu temples and shrines the Buddhist monuments were preserved by the Muslim rulers. It was this Islamic toleration that marked the Muslim rule in Indonesia and fostered the spirit of brotherliness in the entire archipelago. The caste-ridden Hinduism could not stand against the ideals of universal brotherhood taught by Islam. Similarly the pessimistic philosophy of Buddhism was first to dwindle when confronted with the deep positivism enunciated in the Quran.

The Holy Prophet, peace and blessing of Allah be upon him, said:

That person who relieves a Believer from distress in this world God will in the like manner relieve him in the next; and he who shall do good to the indigent, God will do good to him in this world and the next.

* * * * *

My religion is like clouds, dropping much rain; some of them falling on pure, favorable soil, cause fresh grass to grow; some of them fall in hollows by which mankind are benefited, some fall on high lands from which benefit is deprived; then the first two are like the persons acquainted with the religion of God and instructing others and the last like the person not regarding it nor accepting the right path.

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He who sees me sees the Truth

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BOOK REVIEWS

Sufism: An Account of the Mystics of Islam. A. J. Arberry. New York: The Macmillan Press. 1951. 141 pages. Price \$2.00.

Sufism is one of the very few books written in English on Islamic Mysticism. In this small but valuable volume, Dr. Arberry has discussed the basis of Sufism from the Holy Quran and life of the Holy Prophet, and has given an account of the Ascetics, the Mystics and the Theorists among the prominent Sufis. The author has briefly dealt with the structure of Sufi Theory and Practice and has described some of the Sufi orders and their theosophy.

Sufism has rather a different conception in Islam from what is commonly understood in the West. The Western writers are generally inclined to classify the Sufis along with the monks in Christianity and Yogis in Hinduism. Dr. Arberry defines Sufism as "a constant and unvarying phenomenon of the universal yearning of the human spirit for personal communion with God": Islam teaches that this object should be rightly achieved by fulfilling one's obligations both to the Creator and the Creation. Thus a true Muslim wins the pleasure of God and seeks His intercourse not by an abstention from His blessings created to serve mankind and living a monastic life but by becoming a useful and efficient member of the Community and utilizing one's life to his very best for this purpose in the light of the teachings of the Holy Quran. No other soul yearned more than the Holy Prophet for a personal Communion with God and none other achieved such close union with Him as did he, the greatest of all Sufis. Yet he did not put himself away from the world. No doubt, he lived an exemplary simple life, loved the destitute and the poor and gave the teachings, "Do not strain thine eyes after the good things We have provided". Yet, he also taught that, "There is no monasticism in Islam", and thus, set a healthy mean to be followed by the Muslims. The author rightly points out that "the Sufi is bound to study the life of Muhammad, to comprehend his code of conduct, and to be intimate with the Traditions (*Hadith*)".

Dr. Arberry mentions an objection raised by some people that the

Holy Prophet being the Seal of the Prophets, none after him may hope to be favored by God in like manner". This objection is due only to a wrong understanding of this term. The title, 'Seal of Prophets', given to the Holy Prophet in the Holy Quran is not intended to shut out the blessings of Revelation from mankind but to indicate the exalted rank of the Master Prophet Muhammad. To say that the Holy Prophet was sent to deprive mankind from this great favor of Communion and Conversation with the Creator will be a heinous reflection both against God and the Holy Prophet. This title, 'the Seal of Prophets', signifies the fact that with his seal, the truth of all prophets is ratified. Thus every Muslim is enjoined to accept and believe in the truth of all prophets. This phrase shows the character of Muhammad as the Master Prophet (May Allah's peace and blessing be upon him) since it was through him that the truth of all previous revelations was confirmed and the Holy Quran was revealed as a complete Law inclusive of all previous scriptures. The Arabic word for Seal is *Khatam* which is commonly used to denote the superior character or rank of a person in certain respect. An example of this usage is found in the very book of Dr. Arberry where a Muslim saint, Ibn Arabi, is referred to as 'the Seal of Saints'. Should the term, 'the Seal of Saints' be taken to mean that there would be no more saints after Ibn Arabi? Surely that meaning will be against the very spirit of Islam. In fact an explanation of the term may be found in the views of Ibn Arabi himself as given by Dr. Arberry. He writes:

"Ibn Arabi has a special doctrine of Saintsship (*wilaya*). He takes the view that all prophets are also saints, but that the saintly aspect of each prophet is higher than the prophetic aspect. All prophets and saints are manifestations of the spirit of Reality of Muhammad; and the historical Muhammad is superior to all other prophets by virtue of his office as Seal of Prophets. However, he hints, and in fact explicitly declares, that there is also a Seal of the Saints who is the *perfect* manifestation of the spirit of Muhammad." (p. 101)

Dr. Arberry concludes his interesting discourse with a discussion of the decay of Sufism in our times. In fact, this decay is a part of the general decline of the Muslims, which was incidentally also proph-

ed by the Holy Prophet. However, the hope of Islam lies in the belief that revelation of God has never stopped and that He will always send His servants to restore Islam to its original form. It is this conviction that the Ahmadiyya Movement believes that the present decline of the Muslims is destined to turn into a universal and enduring glory of Islam.

Muhammadan Festivals. G. E. von Grunebaum. New York. Henry Schuman, Inc. 1951. 107 pages. Price \$2.50.

In *Muhammadan Festivals*, the author has attempted to make a study of religious festivals of the Islamic world. Dr. von Grunebaum writes in the introductory pages that "Islam either lacked or consciously rejected those elements that elsewhere made for the elaborate ceremonial sequences of ecclesiastical year". He is conscious of the fact that Islam "limited the development of festivals and, in general, helped the outward manifestations of Islam to preserve through the ages a serious note of simplicity". It becomes awful hard for an author to paint a picture of colorful and dramatic ceremonies in this background of simplicity unless legends, myths and fictions are let loose to mix freely with the texts of the original teachings. This technique may add glamour and color to the description of Muslim ceremonies but such a book will immediately lose its value as an authentic and scholarly work. From a Muslim's standpoint it was expected of the author to make a distinction between any rituals enjoined by the Quran and the Holy Prophet from those which later entered the life of the Muslims in different countries. Without this distinction it becomes impossible to form a clear picture of what may truly be called a Muslim ceremony.

In giving an account of Pilgrimage and Ramadhan the author has mentioned many rituals which were neither taught by the Holy Prophet nor were they practiced during his life. He has indiscriminately made use of the legends and national customs along with the Holy Quran and Traditions (*Hadith*) in tracing the origin of Muslim festivals. It may be called a study of "particularities of any one sect, any one period, or any one nationality", which the author claims it not to be, but certainly not a presentation "concerned with the essential and typical elements of Islamic rituals", which he had attempted to give.

The writer has faltered at many points in his discussion of the foundations of Islam. For example, he says that in five daily prayers "only after his ritual obligations have been defrayed is the believer permitted, and even encouraged, to address a personal invocation to his Lord". Besides the fact that the text of Islamic prayers, in the very essence embodies prayers for personal needs, an invocation can be offered at every posture and the examples of such prayers are available in the Traditions.

Again, he says that a Friday sermon is not a discussion of a religious question or the application of religious principle to a problem of the day and that its contents are fixed. The author fails to note that the Traditions have recorded sermons of the Holy Prophet concerning several topics related to the immediate problems.

The author contends that it is a part of the Friday sermon to invoke God's blessing on the head of the state. True, that this practice has been followed by Muslims in some countries but it will not be correct to infer as if it is an essential part of the sermon as given in the original teachings.

Dr. von Grunebaum makes a note of the "radical monotheism" of the doctrine of Islam in the introductory pages. With such an uncompromising faith in the Oneness of God, how can he expect a Muslim to accept his remarks about the ritual of stoning at Mecca during Pilgrimage that, "It seems highly probable that it was the sun-demon who was driven out by the ceremony of stoning"?

It has been the habit of Western writers to draw some kind of parallel between the Islamic teachings and rituals on one hand, and teachings and rituals of other religions on the other, and then to conclude how Islam borrowed, copied, or was influenced by, them. The author of this volume is no exception. He claims that Pilgrimage is the spiritual form of pagan Arab spring festival, and that the Fast during the month of Ramadhan is reminiscent of Judaeo-Christian customs. He tends to forget that Pilgrimage in Islam is invariably connected with Abraham whose religion as mentioned in the Holy Quran was not pagan but pure monotheism. "Follow the faith of Abraham, the upright one, and he was not of the polytheists", says the Holy Quran.

Any contact of the Holy Prophet with Jewish and Christian communities can be traced only in Medina while he is reported

have been fasting earlier in Mecca (Bukhari 30:1). This may be of interest to note that Fasting has been practiced by almost all religions. "Its modes and motives vary considerably according to climate, race, civilization and other circumstances; but it would be difficult to name any religious system of any description in which it is wholly unrecognized", writes Encyclopaedia Britannica (under Fasting).

This may, however, be clarified that Islam accepts all previous Truths and aims to present them in a purified and completed form. But to say that the Holy Prophet imitated or copied the customs and traditions of his time will be tantamount to saying that the people changed their religions and became Muslims for what they already found in their previous religions and customs.

A Treasury of Kahlil Gibran. Translated by Anthony R. Ferris and edited by Martin L. Wolf. New York. 1951. The Citadel Press. 448 pages. Price \$3.95.

Kahlil Gibran, famous poet and philosopher of our times was born in Lebanon in 1883. In his country he was foremost in exposing to the people, particularly the youth, the need for reform, and in advocating a democratic form of government. Because he believed in the rights of man and freedom for all, Gibran found himself in violent controversy with the rich rulers of Lebanon whose selfish greed he attacked. He denounced the hierarchy and monasticism of the Maronite Church, a Uniat rite of the Roman Catholic Church. His attack was not aimed so much upon the doctrines of the Church as it was upon the failure of the religious leaders to live up to their religion.

His bitter denunciation of religious and political injustice soon brought about his exile from the country and excommunication from the Church. Expelled from Syria, Gibran first went to Paris and finally moved to New York in 1912.

During the first ten years of his life in New York, the fame and leadership of Gibran in the Arabic-speaking world grew steadily, spreading from North America to South America and to the Near East. Meanwhile, the English-speaking world became aware that Gibran was a great writer as well as a painter. In 1919 he published his first work in English, *The Madman*; *The Forerunner* followed in 1920; and in 1923 came his masterpiece, *The Prophet*, on which he had worked for many years.

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